Creating and Maintaining Consortia

Objectives

You will learn:

♦ The benefits of consortia participation.

♦ Strategic planning methods for developing new consortia.

♦ How to identify and leverage collective center assets for the benefit of all member centers.

♦ How successful Neighborhood Network consortia work.

Key Points

♦ Benefits of consortia membership.

♦ Strategic planning methods for working with HUD to organize a consortium.

♦ Identify an organizer.

♦ Establish an identity and structure.

♦ Group assessment.
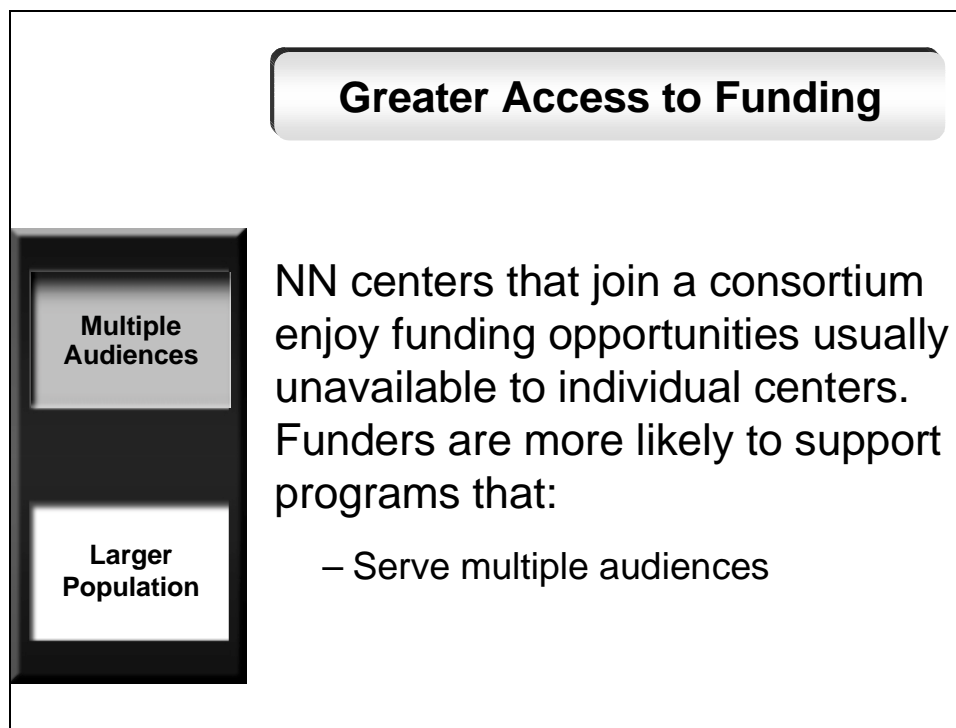
♦ Develop committees.
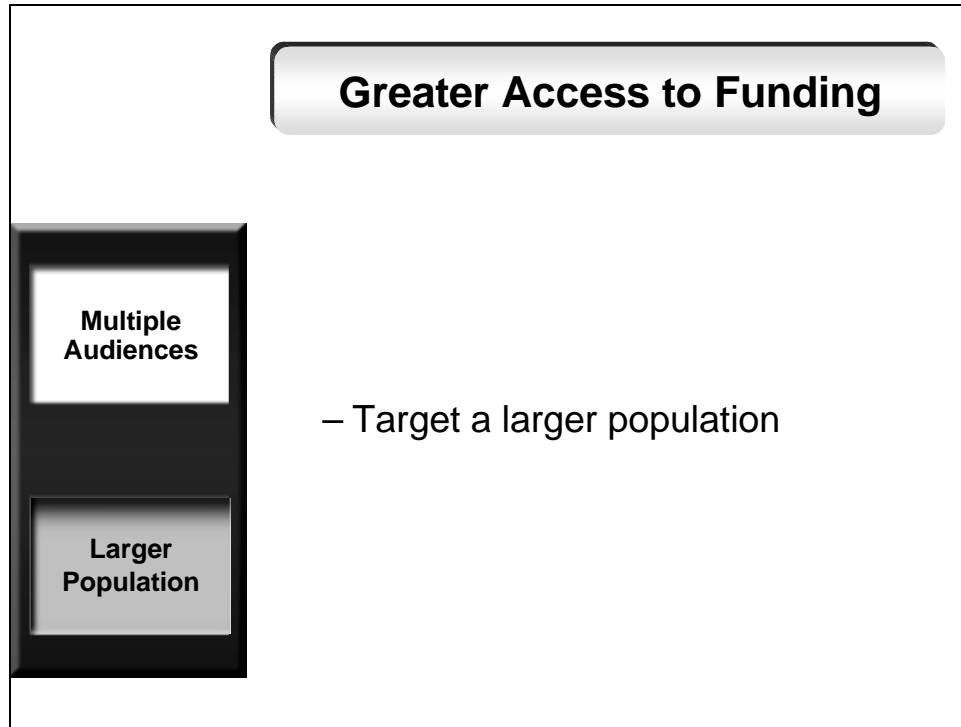
♦ Utilize support.

Program Development Materials

Neighborhood Networks Consortium Development Plan

Establishing a Neighborhood Networks consortium is crucial to ensure the sustainability of individual Neighborhood Networks centers and empower the community residents that utilize Neighborhood Networks programs and services. Neighborhood Networks consortia serve as an association or partnership of Neighborhood Networks centers, organizations, and community partners who share an interest in the development and long-term maintenance of Neighborhood Networks centers and their surrounding community. Although there is no one specific model for Neighborhood Networks consortia, they do share certain characteristics in addition to a focus on long-term sustainability and community-based accountability for centers. Consortia also offer numerous benefits to participating centers.

Benefits of Consortia Membership:

❑ *Funding*—the ever-present search for funding can be assisted through consortium membership, as centers gain access to opportunities usually unavailable to individual Neighborhood Networks centers. Funders are increasingly more likely to support programs that serve a wide population through community-based collaborations. Consortia members can draw on their combined constituencies to present a sizeable target audience for program support. The diversity of the different member centers can help to provide a well-rounded and more comprehensive grant proposal. Consortia members can also share funder contact information with one another, and even invite those funders to join the consortium to strengthen their relationship.

Greater Access to Funding

Multiple Audiences

Larger Population

NN centers that join a consortium enjoy funding opportunities usually unavailable to individual centers. Funders are more likely to support programs that:

– Serve multiple audiences

Greater Access to Funding

Multiple Audiences

Larger Population

– Target a larger population

❑ ***Resource Sharing***—consortium members can share program ideas and centralize common services, such as volunteers, instructors, financial advisors, and marketing and/or technical support. Member centers are more likely to receive favorable rates when purchasing equipment and/or services because they belong to a larger customer base. The consortium can also address programming needs by coordinating joint programming. If an emerging member center does not have the capacity to provide a job-training program for its residents, a successful program at another member center could be expanded to serve those users.
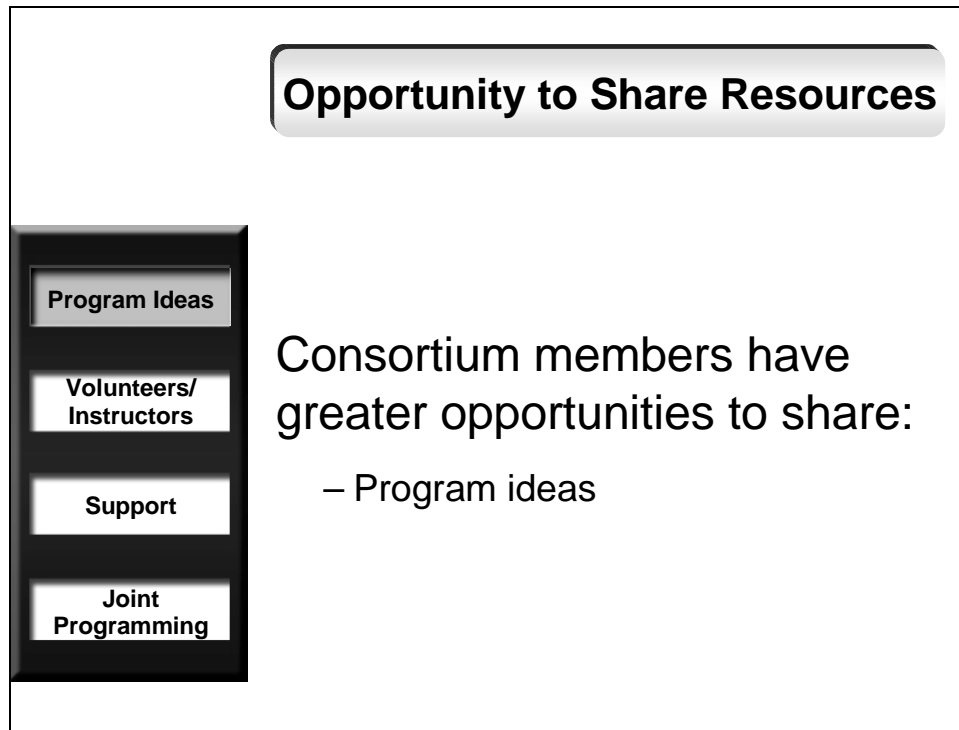
Opportunity to Share Resources

Program Ideas

Volunteers/ Instructors

Support

Joint Programming

Consortium members have greater opportunities to share:

– Program ideas

Opportunity to Share Resources

Program Ideas

Volunteers/ Instructors

Support

Joint Programming

– Volunteers and instructors

Opportunity to Share Resources

Program Ideas

Volunteers/ Instructors

Support

Joint Programming

– Marketing, technical, and financial support

**Opportunity to Share Resources**

Program Ideas

Volunteers/
Instructors

Support

Joint
Programming

– Expertise through joint programming

❑ ***Peer-to-Peer Networking/Mentoring***—consortium membership encourages the exchange of strategies, successes, and failures between member centers to address the unique issues that Neighborhood Networks centers face. Stronger and more established member centers can offer advice and encouragement to emerging member centers. Consortia can facilitate this peer-to-peer network through meetings and one-on-one communication. In large geographic areas where face-to-face meetings may prove difficult, consortia can utilize videoconferencing and distance learning to contact member centers.
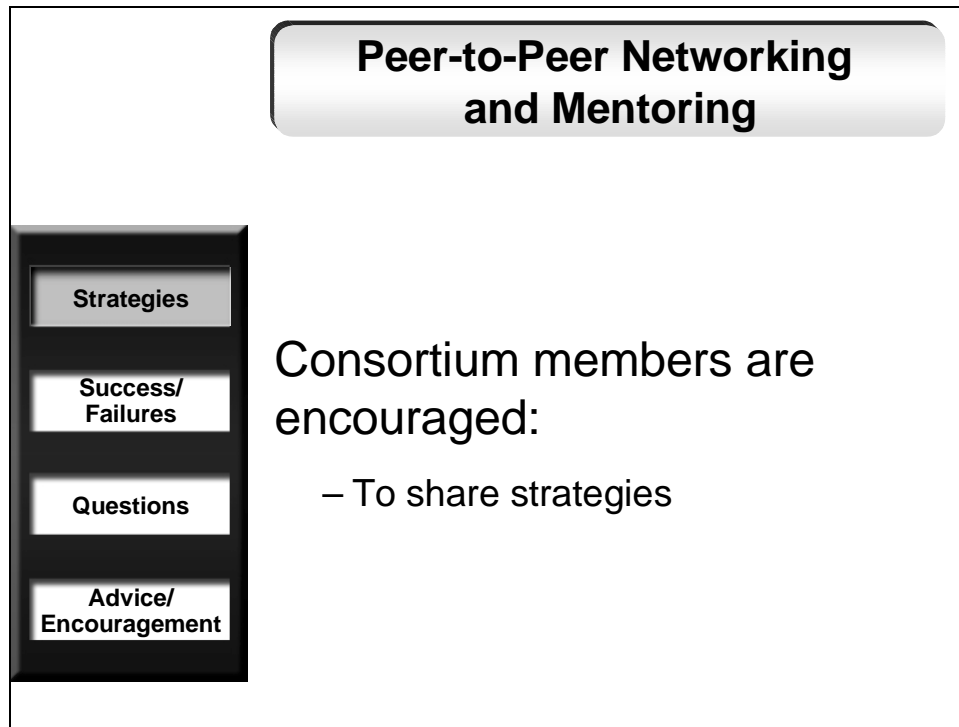
Peer-to-Peer Networking and Mentoring

Strategies

Success/ Failures

Questions

Advice/ Encouragement

Consortium members are encouraged:

– To share strategies

Peer-to-Peer Networking and Mentoring

Strategies

Success/ Failures

Questions

Advice/ Encouragement

– To discuss successes and failures
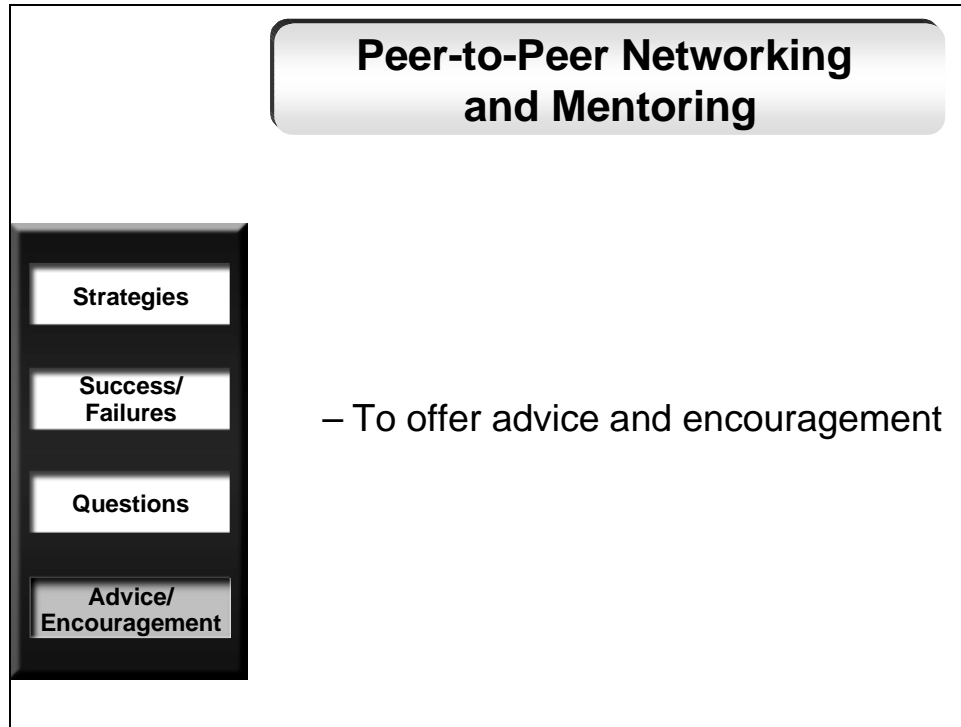
Peer-to-Peer Networking and Mentoring

Strategies

Success/ Failures

Questions

Advice/ Encouragement

– To ask questions

Peer-to-Peer Networking and Mentoring

Strategies

Success/ Failures

Questions

Advice/ Encouragement

– To offer advice and encouragement

❑ ***Nonprofit Status***—Centers without 501(c)(3) status can gain it through membership if the consortium is registered as a 501(c)(3) organization. This 501(c)(3) status offers additional options for access to nonprofit funding and assistance, as it is often a requirement when seeking support from the for-profit business community.

Nonprofit Status

Nonprofit status is often a requirement when seeking support from the private sector. Centers can gain nonprofit status through membership in a nonprofit consortium.

As you can see, Neighborhood Networks consortia offer considerable benefits to both Neighborhood Networks centers and the surrounding community. However, for consortia to be successful, they require a well-planned startup and considerable support during their early years. Below you will find a step-by-step process to aid you in developing a sustainable and successful Neighborhood Networks consortium.

1. Identify Organizer

Step 1: Identify an Organizer

Candidates

The organizer works with the HUD NN coordinator to determine the initial level of interest in a consortium among the NN centers in the prospective area. An area can encompass a state, region, city, or community. Candidates for organizer include:

– NN center staff

– Property owners and managers

– HUD NN coordinators

Candidates for taking the lead in organizing a consortium include:

❑ ***Neighborhood Networks Centers***—Centers are most familiar with the issues that plague Neighborhood Networks centers and are therefore more aware of the benefits that a consortium would offer. Additional resources gained through consortium membership help centers achieve their goals of increasing self-sufficiency and creating a stronger sense of community among residents.

Identify an Organizer (continued)

Center Staff

NN center staff

Center staff are familiar with the issues affecting centers and understand that a consortium:

– Increases each center's self-sufficiency

– Creates a stronger sense of community among residents

❑ ***Property Owners/Managers***—a management company with Neighborhood Networks centers on several properties might find that a consortium offers the perfect mechanism for strengthening their existing centers and encouraging the creation of new centers on additional properties. Neighborhood Networks centers make properties more marketable and competitive; reduce security and upkeep costs; and solidify relationships among management, residents, and the surrounding community.

Identify an Organizer (continued)

Property Owners/ Managers

Property owners and managers

A management company with NN centers on several properties understands that a consortium:

– Strengthens existing centers

– Encourages creation of new centers on additional properties

– Makes properties more marketable and competitive

– Reduces security and upkeep costs

– Solidifies relationships among management, residents, and the community

❑ ***HUD Neighborhood Networks Coordinators***—by working with different centers in a geographical region, Neighborhood Networks coordinators witness the interaction among centers, residents, and community resources from an overarching vantage point. They are well-equipped to bring centers together in search of common goals.

Identify an Organizer (continued)

HUD Coordinators

HUD NN coordinators

HUD NN coordinators work with multiple centers in a region and:

– Recognize common goals among centers

– Understand interactions among centers, residents, and communities

To begin the consortium-building process, the organizer must determine the initial level of interest in participation by Neighborhood Networks centers in a specified area. (This may vary depending on population, number of centers, and center needs. Some consortia focus on entire states, while others are regionally based or located in specific cities or communities.) Organizers should contact the HUD Neighborhood Networks coordinator for that region to assist in the consortium-building process. Coordinators will have updated lists of all Neighborhood Networks centers in their areas and will be able to offer a general assessment of each center, including their capabilities, management, and potential for participation. They may also be aware of additional resources that will strengthen the consortia. To obtain contact information for HUD coordinators, please contact the Neighborhood Networks TA line at (888) 312–2743.

Identify an Organizer (continued)

Create a Consortium

To create a consortium, organizers

- Should contact the HUD NN coordinator for the region of interest

- Can obtain contact information for NN coordinators by calling the NN Technical Assistance line at (888) 312–2743

2. Introductory Meeting

Create a list of key community players and invite them to an introductory meeting. These key players could include Neighborhood Networks centers in proximity; property owners/managers; representatives from local corporate, nonprofit, and government sectors; and possible funding sources for the consortium. Emphasize to all invited that the meeting is introductory and that their attendance and input are essential for creating a consortium that represents the surrounding community and addresses the needs of both Neighborhood Networks centers and local interests. *It is important to remind invitees that their participation will in no way obligate them to join the consortium*.

During the meeting, discuss the benefits of consortium membership (see page 3). You can also open the floor and ask that all present brainstorm about the possibilities for consortium goals and activities in that region. The facilitator of this discussion must be well versed in communicating with diverse organizations and determining goals and objectives.

Step 2: Conduct an Introductory Meeting

Community Stakeholders

Invite key community stakeholders, including:

– Staff from nearby NN centers

– Property owners and managers

– Representatives from local organizations that are prospective sources of funding

– Local business, community, and government leaders

Step 2: Conduct an Introductory Meeting (continued)

Input Essential

No Obligation

- Emphasize to invitees that their attendance and input are essential for creating a consortium responsive to the community's needs

Step 2: Conduct an Introductory Meeting (continued)

Input Essential

No Obligation

- Also emphasize that their participation does not obligate them to join the consortium

3. Establish Identity and Structure

A crucial element in establishing a consortium is the Steering Committee. Based on the goals discussed during the introductory meeting, choose a small and focused group to serve on this committee. Be selective when choosing potential Steering Committee members. Invite individuals with strong management skills and established connections to community stakeholders that might be interested in supporting Neighborhood Networks. This group must be willing to devote or secure funding and staff time to develop and maintain the consortium through its initial building stages.
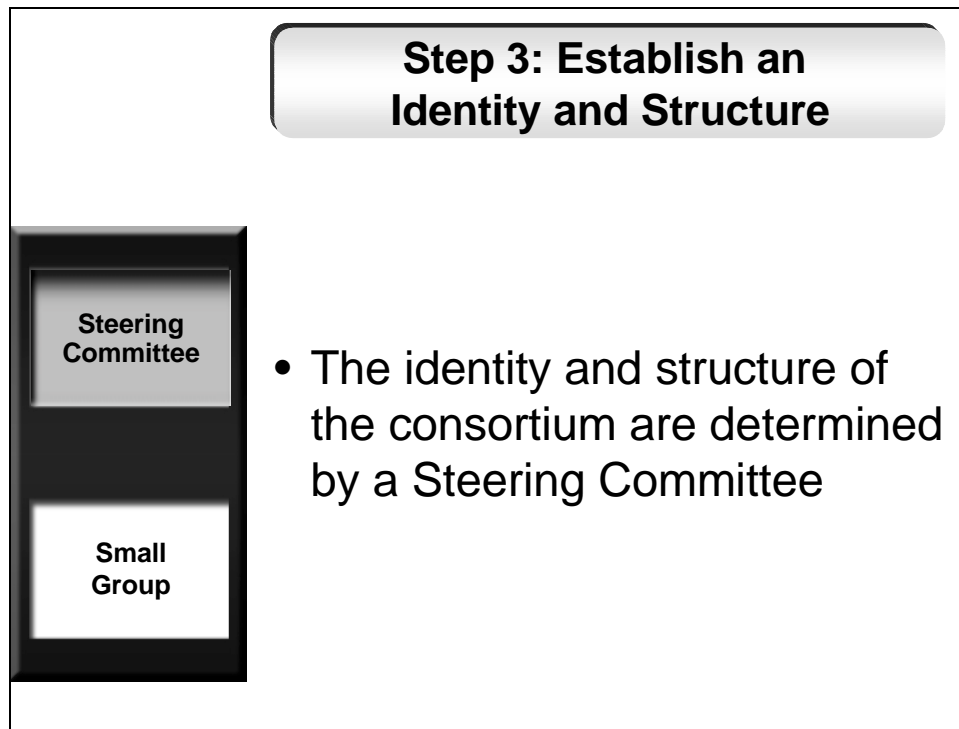
Step 3: Establish an Identity and Structure

Steering Committee

Small Group

- Based on the goals discussed during the introductory meeting, establish a small, focused group to serve on the committee

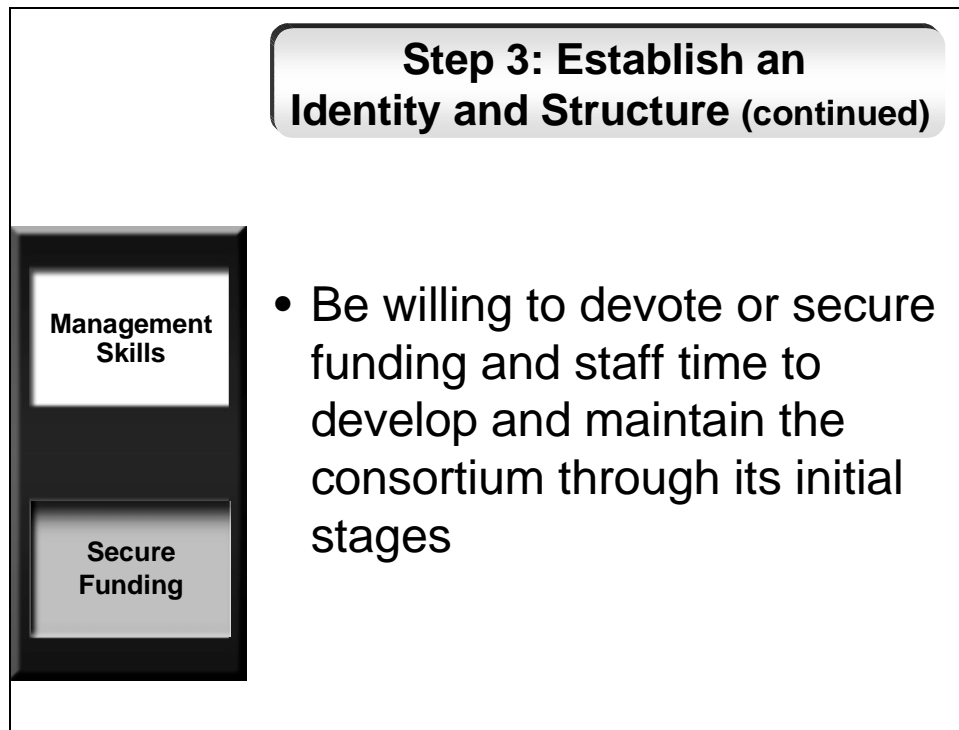## Step 3: Establish an Identity and Structure (continued)

Management Skills

Secure Funding

Steering Committee members should:

- Have strong management skills and established connections to community stakeholders

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Step 3: Establish an Identity and Structure (continued)

Management Skills

Secure Funding

- Be willing to devote or secure funding and staff time to develop and maintain the consortium through its initial stages

Initially, the Steering Committee determines the reason(s) for the consortium's existence—Neighborhood Networks center development, local community development, financial support, peer support, and so on—to help focus the planning process. Although this reasoning can certainly be revisited at a later date, it is essential to establish initial objectives so that all members can work toward a common goal.

The Steering Committee also develops the structure of the consortium by:

❑ Investigating securing nonprofit status (if a participating center already has nonprofit status, it might be possible to expand that center into the consortium headquarters and eliminate the application process).
❑ Suggesting candidates for a consortium president and board of directors (again, be selective; choose individuals that are committed to creating an effective and sustainable consortium).
❑ Creating group bylaws (bylaws help to formalize the consortium, establishing its purpose, membership requirements, officers, financial affairs, etc.).
❑ Establishing a communication schedule with all group members.
❑ Establishing a meeting schedule with an agenda for the next group meeting.

Examples of similar documentation from already existing consortia are included to assist you in this process. *Note: Depending upon the needs of consortium members, less formal measures may be appropriate. The organizational structure can evolve over time as the consortium grows in size and scope.*

4. Group Assessment

An important item for a second consortium meeting is an assessment of the consortium's membership. Utilizing the attached *Consortium Baseline Information Form,* you can assess your consortium's collective strengths and weaknesses to determine its needs and direction. The form encourages review of each member center's programs and partnerships. This discussion will highlight opportunities for joint programming and uncover potential partners that might be willing to expand and work with the entire consortium. You can also assess your needs via the **STEP** Strategy (**S**ervices, **T**raining, **E**quipment, and **P**lacement opportunities) to determine where partnership support is lacking. After completing the form, please forward the information to Aspen Systems so your consortium can be recognized and included in our technical support services.

Step 4: Assess the Consortium's Members (continued)

Programs/
Partnerships

Joint
Programming

Prospective
Partners

STEP

Use the Consortium Baseline Information Form to:

- Review each member center's programs and partnerships

Step 4: Assess the Consortium's Members (continued)

Programs/
Partnerships

Joint
Programming

Prospective
Partners

STEP

- Highlight opportunities for joint programming

Step 4: Assess the Consortium's Members (continued)

Programs/ Partnerships

Joint Programming

Prospective Partners

STEP

- Identify prospective partners

Step 4: Assess the Consortium's Members (continued)

Programs/ Partnerships

Joint Programming

Prospective Partners

STEP

- Determine where partnership support is lacking; use the STEP (Services, Training, Equipment, and Placement) strategy
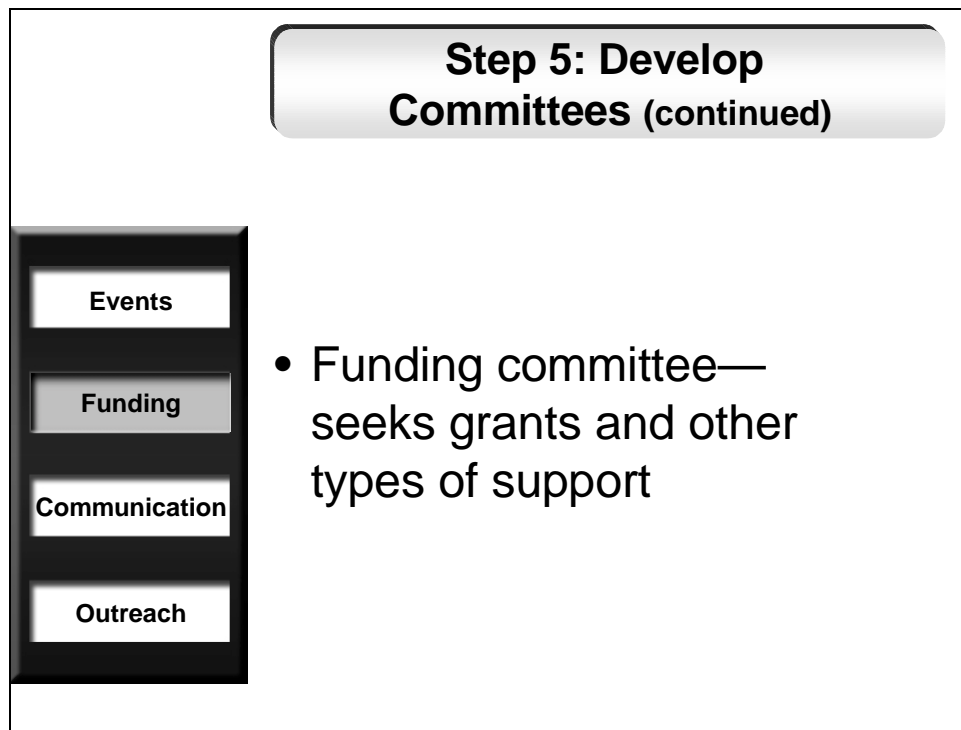
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5. Develop Committees

In response to your self-assessment, you may develop committees to focus on addressing crucial needs for your consortium. Committees can also help with the day-to-day maintenance of the consortium. Possible committees include:

❑ *Events*—responsible for coordinating programs and events, such as grand openings, open houses, and pilot programs.
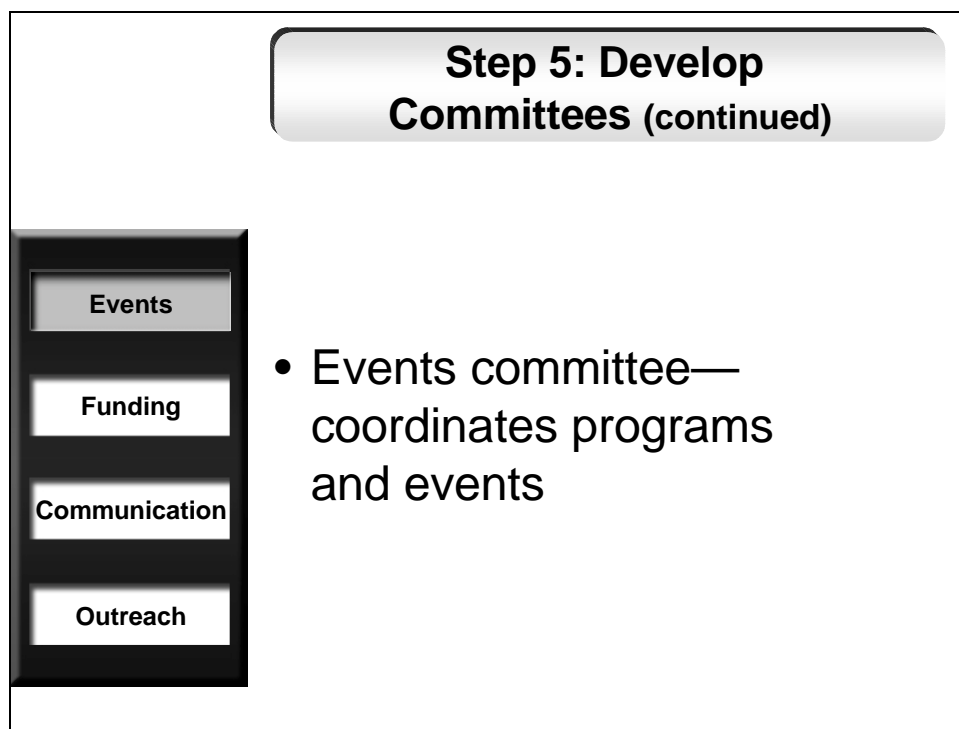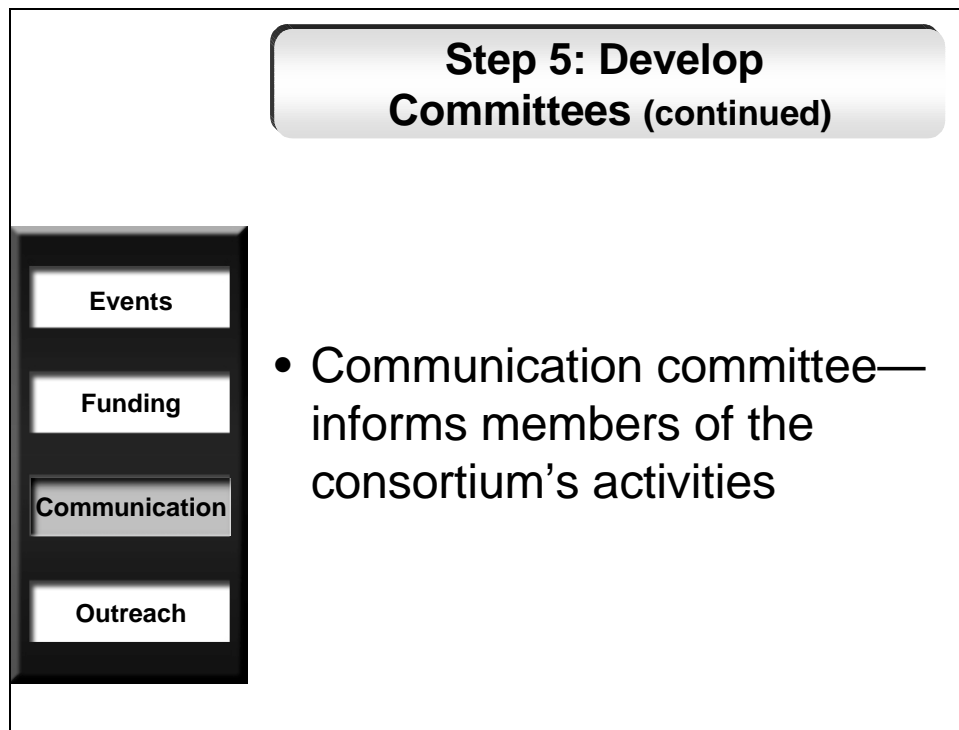
❑ ***Funding*—**responsible for seeking grants and other funding opportunities that coincide with the consortium's goals and objectives.

Step 5: Develop Committees (continued)

Events

Funding

Communication

Outreach

- Funding committee— seeks grants and other types of support

❑ *Communication*—responsible for updating members on all meeting itineraries and other consortium developments.

Step 5: Develop Committees (continued)

Events

Funding

Communication

Outreach

- Communication committee— informs members of the consortium's activities

❑ ***Outreach/Recruitment***—responsible for outreach to Neighborhood Networks centers that have not yet joined, as well as potential community partners and/or clients.

Step 5: Develop Committees (continued)

Events

Funding

Communication

Outreach

• Outreach committee—recruits prospective members, partners, and clients
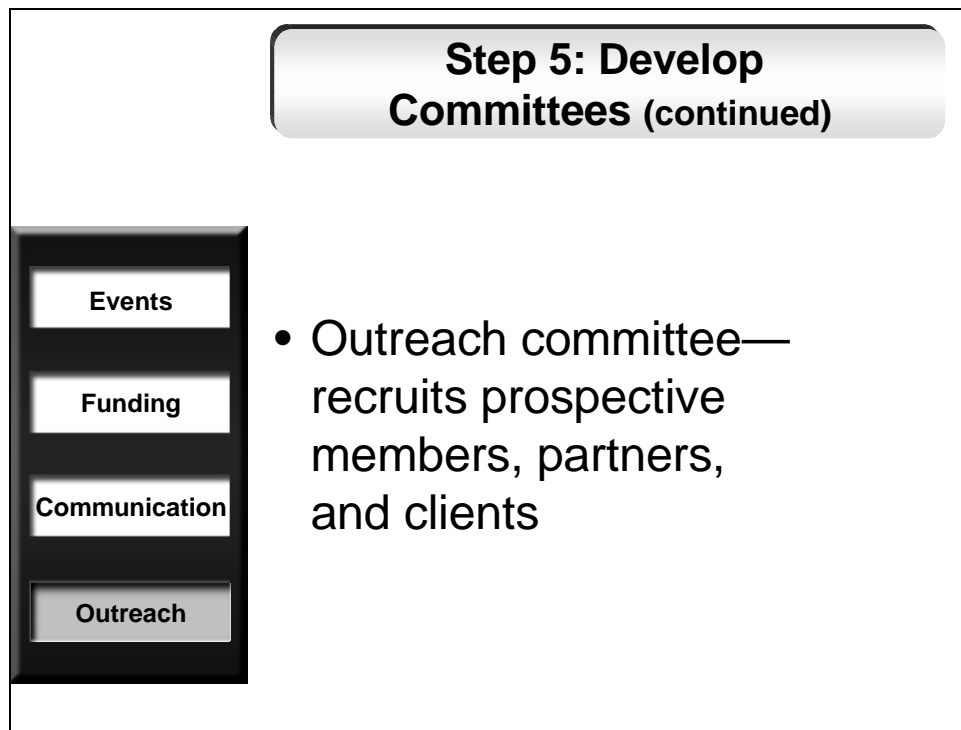
6. Utilize Support

Once the *Consortium Baseline Information Form* has been completed, forward the collected information to Aspen Systems so that you can take full advantage of their support services offered to Neighborhood Networks consortia.

Step 6: Utilize Support

To take full advantage of support services for NN consortia, forward the Consortium Baseline Information Form to Aspen Systems

Aspen seeks to:

❑ Develop key partnerships with organizations that can fulfill or facilitate the programs and services necessary to support, strengthen, and assist in establishing new consortia. Partnerships will be based on the **STEP** Strategy and directed to address your indicated needs in those areas.

Step 6: Utilize Support (continued)

Key Partnerships

Network of Consortia

Aspen seeks:

• To develop key partnerships with organizations that can provide the support and services necessary to help establish new consortia

❑ Encourage a network of Neighborhood Networks consortia through monthly conference calls. Held on the third Thursday of each month, these forums provide consortia the opportunity to exchange information, strategize solutions for pressing issues, and share resources.

Step 6: Utilize Support (continued)

Key Partnerships

Network of Consortia

- To promote a network of consortia by conducting monthly conference calls that facilitate interaction among consortia, including exchanging information and sharing resources

❑ Post resources for consortia on the Neighborhood Networks Web site. The consortia page will feature a summary of the activities, structures, memberships, accomplishments, and contacts of each consortia. Resources designed to assist consortia development and maintenance as well as addressing short and long-term goals are also available.

Step 6: Utilize Support (continued)

Resources for Consortia

Strategic Plan

Training

Aspen seeks:

- To post funding opportunities, success stories, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and other resources for consortia on the NN Web site

❏   Assign a technical assistance/partnership expert to each consortium.

Step 6: Utilize Support (continued)

Resources for Consortia

Strategic Plan

Training

- To help each consortium develop a strategic plan that includes development and maintenance objectives as well as short- and long-term goals

❑ Provide training on consortia topics during the National Conference and Regional Training Assistance Workshops.

Step 6: Utilize Support (continued)

Resources for Consortia

Strategic Plan

Training

• To provide training on consortia topics at regional training assistance workshops and the NN national conference
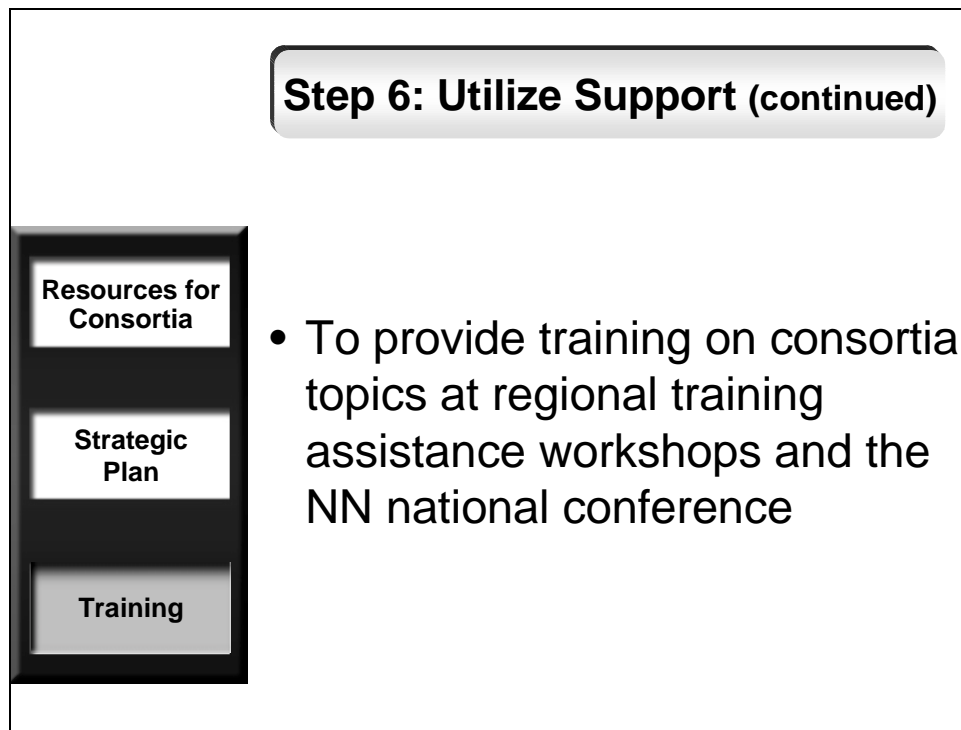
This plan should provide you with the basic guidelines of building a consortium. If you require additional assistance, feel free to contact the Neighborhood Networks Technical Assistance hotline at (888) 312–2743.

Model Consortia

Digital Promise

Digital Promise (NNC of Washington)

- Helped start and maintain more than 50 computer learning centers in low-income housing communities and distributed more than $50,000 in hardware and software

Model Consortia (continued)

Alabama NNC

Alabama Neighborhood Networks Consortium

- Helps emerging NN centers develop business plans, obtain equipment and software, and find programs and volunteers in the community

- Conducts large-scale marketing and outreach to the community on behalf of all centers

Model Consortia (continued)

Duval County (Florida) Neighborhood Networks Consortium

- In partnership with Edward Waters College, provides NN centers with technical assistance in distance learning, grant writing, communications, and performance assessment. The college also provides student volunteers for NN centers, where they can fulfill a graduation requirement of 50 hours of community service.

Duval County NNC

Consortium Baseline Information Form

I. Consortium contact information

1. Name of Consortium: _____
2. Contact Person/Title: _____
3. Street Address: _____
4. City, State, ZIP: _____
5. Phone: _____
6. Fax: _____
7. E-mail: _____
8. Name of HUD Neighborhood Networks
   representative to consortium (if any): _____

II. Status of consortium

1. When was the consortia established? Month: _____ Year: _____ # of Centers:___
   Other comments:
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. How many Neighborhood Networks centers are members? _____

3. Is the consortia incorporated? If yes, date incorporated and in what state? If no, what are your
   plans regarding incorporation? _____
   _____

4. Does the consortia have 501(c)(3) status (tax exemption)? If yes, when did the IRS provide
   approval? If no, what are your plans regarding tax exemption? _____
   _____
   _____

5. Does the consortia meet each week, each month, or quarterly? _____

6. How is the consortia currently financially supported?
   A. Foundation (type/names): _____
      _____
      _____

   B. Corporate (type/names): _____
      _____
      _____

   C. Business (type/names): _____
      _____
      _____

   D. Other (type/names): _____
      _____
      _____

III. List each center that is a member of your consortium (attach additional sheets as necessary)

Name of center and contact person (w/ title)	Address and property name	Telephone and fax number(s)	Center E-mail and Web site addresses

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

IV. Types of partnerships by center (attach additional sheets as necessary)

Name of center	Type of partnership(s)	Name of center	Type of partnership(s)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

V. From which areas are most of your Consortium partnerships drawn? (check those that apply)

☐	Government	☐	TANF
☐	Foundations	☐	Marketing
☐	Business	☐	Daycare
☐	Faith based	☐	Technology
☐	Economic development	☐	Transportation
☐	Community development	☐	Schools and colleges

National Partnerships

VI. Do any members of your consortium have a working relationship with any of the following national partners? (yes or no)

Organization	Partnership		Organization	Partnership	
	Yes	**No**		**Yes**	**No**
American Association of Community Colleges			HOPE Worldwide		
America's Promise			Magic Johnson Foundation		
Army National Guard "About Face" Program			National Centers for Excellence		
Bureau of Primary Healthcare			National Council on the Aging		
California State University, Office of Service Learning			U.S. Department of Education		
Cisco Systems			U.S. Department of Health and Human Services		
Digital Art Communities			U.S Department of Justice		
Federal Bureau of Investigation			U.S. Department of Transportation		
Youth Ventures			Technology For All		

VII. In which of the following areas are you most in need of partnership support?
(place an "x" where applicable)
__   **S**ervices   (transportation, childcare, healthcare, education, TANF, Internet)
__   **T**raining   (computer, employment, life skills, GED, entrepreneurship, management, fundraising)
__   **E**quipment   (hardware, software, telephone, fax, e-mail, furniture)
__   **P**lacement   (placement of clients in sustainable employment with potential for career advancement)

VIII. Which of the following are the most difficult issues in maintaining the Neighborhood Networks consortia?
(place an "x" where applicable)
__   Lack of clear purpose.
__   Unrealistic goals.
__   Differences in philosophy and ways of working.
__   Lack of communication.
__   Unequal and unacceptable balance of power and control.
__   Key interests missing from the partnership.
__   Financial and time commitments outweigh the potential benefits.
__   A history of conflict among key interests.

Please fax completed information form to Steve McLaine at (301) 519–5980.

Activity

Activity

Online Resources

Neighborhood Networks Resources
Available at *www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org*

Arizona Neighborhood Networks Centers Form Consortium to Share Resources and Knowledge
This success story describes how two Neighborhood Networks centers in Arizona have established the Arizona Neighborhood Networks Partnership.

Alabama Finds Consortium Pays, With a Little Help from Washington State
This success story describes how the Alabama Neighborhood Networks Consortium maintains and increases funding.

Neighborhood Networks Consortium Raises More Than $4,000
This success story describes the fundraising activities of a Neighborhood Networks consortium in Seattle.

Sixteen Fla. Centers Unveil Duval County Consortium
This success story describes how the city of Jacksonville launched an initiative in 1996 to bring educational and job-training services to low-income neighborhoods in Duval County, Florida. Since then, 16 Neighborhood Networks centers have opened there, providing educational and job-training services to residents.

Other Resources
www.gao.gov/new.items/d0280.pdf
This URL links to a PDF file of the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) publication *Workforce Development Consortia Provide Needed Services*. The publication describes GAO's response to a Congressional query on the reasons communities form workforce development consortia as well as on the activities and outcomes of the consortia.

www.ctcnet.org/regionalagenda.html
Regional Development Agendas provided by the America Connects Consortium and CTCNet detail how community technology centers and other organizations have joined together to support their surrounding communities.

Presenters Biographies

Patsy M. Fletcher (Los Angeles) is a consultant providing technical assistance in the areas of economic and community development, public housing management, resident initiatives, and diversity issues. Fletcher has more than 25 years experience in the area of public and low-income housing community development and civil rights enforcement and training. Before becoming a consultant, she was the executive assistant and chief of staff at the District of Columbia Department of Public and Assisted Housing. Fletcher currently serves as a consultant to Aspen Systems in the development of consortia of community technology centers, a grants consultant for a community-based nonprofit tenants organization, and history consultant for cultural resources firm. Past clients include housing authorities of Daytona Beach, Tampa, Philadelphia, and Greene County, AL; and resident groups and nonprofit organizations in Washington, D.C., Greenville, SC and Statesville, NC. She has also worked as an investigator, manager, and appeals specialist in the area of civil rights enforcement for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Alaska State Commission on Human Rights, and the private sector. Fletcher has a master of science degree in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University, a master of arts degree in Historic Preservation from Delaware State University, and a bachelor of arts degree in Anthropology from the University of Washington. She has published articles on historic preservation as an economic development tool for African-American communities and has been a presenter at conferences and symposiums.

Fritz Hirsch (Washington, D.C.) currently serves as Project Director for the National Capital Area Neighborhood Networks Consortium (NCANN), a consortium of Neighborhood Networks centers in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. In this capacity, he develops and implements programs and services for consortium members, leads consortium organizational development and fundraising efforts and oversees the day-to-day financial and operational activities of the consortium. Prior to serving as NCANN Project Director, Mr. Hirsch worked for the Neighborhood Networks contractor in the areas of consortia development, program development and evaluation, financial management and database development. Mr. Hirsch's other experience includes policy and procedure development and evaluation for federal and local government small business lending programs. A native of Portland, Oregon, Mr. Hirsch holds a master's degree in Public Administration and a bachelor's degree in Biology and German Literature.

Steve McLaine, Neighborhood Networks partnership development specialist, facilitates Neighborhood Networks partnerships, supports existing and new consortia, and researches issues that affect technology opportunities for underserved communities. He has more than 7 years experience working within the nonprofit sector, serving as the assistant director of Young Scholars' Institute, a nonprofit learning center that provided educational, cultural, and recreational activities to inner-city public school students. He also worked in public relations for INROADS, a nonprofit organization that offers internships and career training to minority high school and college students. McLaine has a B.A. in English from the University of Virginia and a master of arts degree in public policy from Georgetown University. His master's practicum, "Minority and Low Income User Satisfaction at Community Technology Centers," is currently posted on the CTCNet Web site and his work on ethnic online communities will be featured in a book to be published by Routledge in 2002.

Kathy Morton-Paal (Washington, D.C.) is director of volunteer and community services for Wesley Housing Development Corporation, an affordable housing developer in Alexandria, Virginia, where she coordinates community services for residents and organizes volunteer activities. Ms. Paal oversees three Neighborhood Networks centers in Northern Virginia and is

cochair of the National Capital Area Neighborhood Networks Consortium. She coordinates supportive services for Agape House, a residence for individuals living with HIV/AIDS, and Springdale House, a shared housing program for the elderly and disabled. Prior to joining Wesley Housing, Ms. Paal was program coordinator of the South Washington Family Strengthening Collaborative and implemented a network of services for families at risk of child abuse and neglect

Susan Wyman (Washington, D.C.), partnerships and consortia manager, has more than 20 years of experience in social marketing and community outreach, which includes an in-depth knowledge of community resource development; media relations; conference support; public speaking; call center/order fulfillment management; and program research, design, implementation, and management. She provides outreach, networking, statistics, and conference program coordination for over 150 national yearly events. For the Neighborhood Networks program, she was accountable for the development of national partnerships and strategies to promote the development and placement of Neighborhood Networks centers with computerized community connection plans in HUD- insured and assisted housing. She was responsible for providing services that included the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of information to potential national partners and forming business and nonprofit community alliances to support centers nationwide. Under the SuperNOFA clearinghouse, she directed the hiring and training of 45 staff members to provide call intake, referral information, and order fulfillment. She held supervisory responsibilities for newly formed computer/customer assistance help desk in support of 50 school districts on mainframe, LAN and stand-alone environment for both administrative and instructional functions. She has implemented and managed a national call center and staff, which included order intake referral, distribution of applications, and design of electronic procedures to track financial statistics. She has also managed conference staff and exhibits to ensure effective outreach to targeted audiences. Ms. Wyman earned her B.A. in business administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo, New York.